

INVOCATION OFFERED BY

THE REV. DR. FREDERICK BROWN HARRIS
CHAPLAIN OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE
AT THE
CORNERSTONE CEREMONY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

11:30 AM, 3 NOVEMBER 1959

O, Thou God and Father of mankind,

Who putteth down the mighty from their seats and exalteth the humble and the meek. Thou has made us heirs of all the ages. As in this high hour we come with our fallible hands to lay the cornerstone of the noble structure which is here to rise as a witness to Thy truth which makes men free, we lift our hearts in gratitude for the greatness of our heritage bequeathed to us over the struggling ages by those who, amid ignorance and barbarism and man's inhumanity to man, struck light from the flint of their own courage. Thou hast made us heirs of those who pushed forward, turning harshness into mercy, callousness into sympathy, enmity into understanding, and who through the practice of their concern for others milted away hatred.

As we lay this stone conscious that others have put the torch of freedom and of human dignity in our hands, we pray for a new resolve now that the precious gains of Christian civilization are threatened by sinister forces without pity or conscience, that we may guard it and nourish it and increase it, that we of the present may be worthy of the past and that the future may look to us with gratitude.

In spite of our own shortcomings which we confess with contrition, in this hour of global crisis Thou has summoned us as trustees of Thy

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truth to defend our birthright and to help create institutions essential to human progress.

In this dear land of our love and prayer may we close our national ranks in a new unity, as principalities of darkness seek to destroy the precious things we hold nearest our hearts and to enslave all mankind with fetters of the body and mind which degrade the individual.

In this titanic struggle of the ages may this building whose cornerstone we now lay with a prayer to the God Who hath made and preserved us a nation, be a cathedral of truth, an arsenal of freedom, an armory for battalions marshaled against deceit and falsehood, a fortress of patience and persistence where a patriotism pure and undefiled, as harmless as a dove but as wise as a serpent, shall help make our republic

sufficient for the tasks before her set.

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